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With the Colors: Jasper County IL Servicemen
Overseas, 1941-1945

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With the Colors

1923/42

Private Ralph A. Dhom, Company C, Eighty-third Armored Reconnaissance battalion, Rice, California, writes his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Burton of near Falmouth, as follows:

"We are out for fifteen days this time. We were out week before last for six days. We had to work last week end to get our stuff ready to come out but we are having this week end to rest up in, out here where nothing bothers us but the sun. It isn't so hot today. We don't see camp until a week from this next Friday unless changes in the plans are made.

"We are supposed to have tomorrow off to go swimming. I hope we get to anyway, I am answering my letters today for another hard week that's coming our way again. I will try and answer your questions now but understand I am only guessing. About our leaving, it won't be right soon. Don't believe we are out here for the fun of the thing. We are really going through a pretty hard schedule.

"We must be about ready for the best they have over there. Bink (H. L. Dhom) is now out of the hospital and back with his company. I haven't seen him yet. Of course he won't be any too good for a while yet but my opinion the most of the boys will eventually be as good as ever.

"Now for the Christmas present aunt. If I'm still out here on the desert I would like ice best of all and I suggest you send the limit as far as weight goes too.

"As for food, we are fed plenty and good food, too. While we are out on problems we are fed different kinds of canned rations for experimental purposes just to find the best kinds. Some of them are better than others but they'll all keep soul and body together and that's all that's necessary."

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Private Elza Turner, Battery C, Fifty-Sixth battalion, Camp Callan, San Diego, California writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Everett Turner of Rose Hill vicinity: "I fired my 30-30 rifle today and got six bullseyes out of ten shots, and had to change the elevation and windage on my rifle. They sure do kick but it is lots of fun.

"We were down in the 'butts' this morning, meaning we were in front marking targets. When they fired we had to pull the target down and give them the score with a flag. If they got a 5 or bullseye we put up the white disc cover the bullseye; if they got 4 we put the red over where the shot hit; if they got 3 we put up the cross and if they got 2 we put up the black disc. For a miss (and they do miss the target) you wave the red across the target. I made a 46 out of a possible 50, which is almost enough to qualify for expert rifleman."

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Mr. and Mrs. J. Ed Jourdan of Newton received a V-mail letter, Thursday, from Leonard M. "Bill" Jourdan, United States Army Air Forces, that he had arrived safely in Australia. "All I can tell about myself is that I am in Australia," he said. "This is really a nice country here. I had a hard time with the Australian money for a time but I understand it now." He urges using V-mail.

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Harold Webb, who is in North Charleston, South Carolina, writes his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lester E. Webb of Newton vicinity, that he is well and likes it fine. He is in the office of a United States Army base there.

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Staff Sergeant Leland Conley left Wednesday for Camp Barkley, Texas, after a short visit with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ben F. Conley of Newton.

Private Leo LaFief, who is in the 315th Air Base Squadron at Wendover, Utah, is visiting his wife and daughter and other relatives at Newton.